VISION COMICS
10 MAR 1997
$2.50 US

Katmandu

FOR MATURE READERS ONLY

KATMANDU ISSN 1088-1131 $2.50 US / $3.75 CANADA

VISION COMICS

DARRELL BENVENUTO, PUBLISHER

The driving force behind Vision Comics, Mr. Benvenuto was born and raised in New York City. He initially began making forays into the publishing world in 1992, and came out with an artist's showcase book, the American Journal of Anthropomorphics, in 1993. Since then, he has continually expanded the company product line. With the slow decay of the comic market, Mr. Benvenuto has been directing company expansion into other areas, specifically the Book, Magazine and Animation Industries, creating two other divisions of the parent company in addition to Vision Comics -- Vision Books and Vision Productions.

Memorable Quote: Greek Gods? Been done, been done. Done to death.

J. MARRUS, ART DIRECTOR, GOR PROJECT

Originally from Virginia, Marrus came to New York to work with an animation company. After a few years of slaving away as an animation representative, she transferred to Valiant Comics, where she worked as an inker. Eventually, she moved to the Warp Graphics, home of ElfQuest. Her unique blend of talent and experience well-suited her for the position of Art Director on GOR Magazine. She supervises a staff of eight artists and digital colorists in its production, from layout to finished product. She can be seen at conventions around the world, from California to London, England, promoting the magazine.

Memorable Quote: If it came to the table on someone else's plate, it has no calories.

JEREMY BERNAL, ANIMATION DIRECTOR

To sum things up, Jeremy Bernal is a jack-of-all-trades. Originally from the Chicago area, he attended Columbia College, Majoring in Film/Video/Animation. Jeremy began his career as a freelance animator, working on television commercials such as Lucky Charms and Culligan. He was then hired as a Staff Artist/Animator/Musician at Parallax Software, the makers of Descent and Descent II, doing art and soundtrack work for the PC video game market. Now he resides in New York, working for Vision as Animation Director for the New York Animation Studio. He is seen here in his negative phase, so that his evil arch-enemies cannot identify him. Jeremy supervises a team of 2D & 3D animators.

Memorable Quote: Yeeee-haaaw! ... Oh, God. I'm a hick!

KATHRYN BOLINGER, STAFF ARTIST

Hailing from Texas, Kathryn moved to New York to work with Valiant Comics. After some time there, she also moved to Warp Graphics, where she worked with the ElfQuest teams on a number of projects. Coming over to Vision, she brought with her a wealth of talent and fresh ideas. Not only is she working on GOR Magazine as an inker, but she has an entire project under her control, Winter: Wayfarer. A talented artist, inker, digital colorist and part-time Panda Impersonator, Kathryn's work can be seen, in part at least, in the exquisite digital coloring of BEATRIX Issue #1, and the cover of BEATRIX #2. Keep an eye out for the Winter series, though... it's going to be simply incredible!

Memorable Quote: The lizard took a really big bite out of my finger! And it's a herbivore, too!

KATMANDU, Vol. 1, Issue 10, March 1997. ISSN #1088-1131 FIRST PRINTING.
Published by Vision Comics, a division and DBA of Med Systems Company, Darrell Benvenuto, President and Publisher. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: Med Systems Company, Post Office Box 580009, Flushing, NY, 11358-0009. Toll-Free US Phone: (800) 667-7943 or (516) 328-6900, Fax: (516) 328-6989. SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, NY AND AT OTHER MAILING OFFICES. All stories and artwork are Copyright (c) 1997 as above. All other remaining/added material is TM and Copyright (c) 1997 Med Systems Company. All Rights Reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form now known or to be developed, without the express written consent of at least one of the aforementioned copyright holders or the publisher.
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PRINTED IN CANADA

Katmandu

Curse of the Blood
PART ONE

〈MILADY, COME TO THE CLINIC FOR THE BIRTH. YOU'LL NEED A SHOT AFTERWARD, FOR HEALTHY KITTENS LATER.〉
〈IS THIS MAGIC? ONLY WISEWOMEN MAY PRACTICE MAGIC.〉
VITAMINS

STORY: CAROLE CURTIS
PENCILS: SHAWNTAE HOWARD
INKS: SHANE FISHER
LETTERS: TED VOLLMER

〈MY MOTHER'S MOTHER *WAS* A WISEWOMAN. SHE TAUGHT ME THIS. I MUST TAKE IT TOO.〉

〈WHY DO I NEED THIS?〉

〈IT IS THE BLOOD OF YOUR HUSBAND AND YOURSELF THAT MAKES THIS NECESSARY.〉

〈LET ME TELL YOU A STORY ABOUT MY ANCESTRESS...〉

LISKA, PYNDAN--- GOING TO SLEEP ALL DAY? IT'S PANKA'S BIG DAY! GO DOWN TO THE STREAM AND GET CLEAN!

MORNING, SHAYGIN-

TURN YOUR HEAD, PYNDAN. SHE'S *MY* WIFE, NOT YOURS.

LISKA, I'LL BE AT THE STREAM.

I'LL BE DOWN SOON.

MORNING, HUSBAND.

I COULDN'T WAIT TO GET BACK TO YOU.

YOU ARE *SOAKED!*

YOUR *SON* IS DEVELOPING *FANGS!*

OH?

YES! HE'LL BE *OFF* THE BREAST SOON.

YOU NEED TO TALK WITH THEA TODAY.

HMM, WHY?

SHE'S SHOWING SIGNS- OF HER WOMANHOOD.

ALREADY? IT SEEMS LIKE ONLY YESTERDAY I BIRTHED HER.

SOON SHE'LL BE ATTRACTING YOUNG MEN.

WE MUST PREPARE HER SHURINAR STONES. WHICH BAG IS MINE?

LATER, THE CHILDREN ARE WITH MOTHER SANNA.

HOW DELICIOUS--- TO FEEL YOUR TEETH ON MY NECK.

MOTHER!

OOPS!

MOTHER! IT'S TIME!

WE HAVE TO GO TO THETIS' NEST!

TIME, THEA?

YOU GO AHEAD.

THE SEASONS CHANGE SO FAST.

THETIS IS *SWEET*. SHE LET ME TURN THE EGGS.

SOON *YOU* WILL BECOME A WOMAN.

HMPH. DARMIN WAS TEASING ME ABOUT MY TEATS.

SHE SMELLS MY SCENT ON YOU, NORMALLY SHE'D BITE YOUR HAND OFF.

WELL, THEY *MUST* GROW TO FEED YOUR BABIES.

RRIT?

THETIS DOESN'T HAVE THEM, AND SHE FEEDS *HER* BABIES.

YES, WELL---SHE'S A LIZARD. YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO CHEW FOOD AND COUGH IT UP, WOULD YOU?

NO! YUCK!!

THETIS--- GOOD GIRL. THEY'RE HATCHING, AREN'T THEY?

---rrgle---

LOOK AT THE LEGS ON THIS ONE, THEA. WHAT A RUNNER *HE'LL* BE!

MOTHER, DON'T TEASE! THAT'S A *GIRL!*

THETIS! LOOK!

WHEN THEY'RE BIGGER, WOULD YOU LIKE ONE?

TO RIDE?

...AND AS PART OF YOUR FUTURE DOWRY.

LIKE PANKA?

YES.

SHE DECIDES TODAY BETWEEN HER SUITORS.

SNIFF SNIFF

MAYBE I'LL BE A WARRIOR LIKE YOU.

THAT HONOR WAS *CONFERRED* ON ME, THEA. MUCH DEATH HAS SURROUNDED IT.

LIKE MY FATHER'S...

LET'S CELEBRATE NEW LIFE NOW.

PANKA, ONLY I WILL DANCE WITH YOU TONIGHT.

PANKA, WILL YOU SAVE YOUR DANCES FOR ME?

WILOAM, GARETH, THE NIGHT IS FAR AWAY, AND MOTHER SANNA WAITS FOR ME.

THE MUSCLES ARE *ALMOST* HEALED, BUT *NO* RIDING OR HUNTING FOR ANOTHER MOON. STRENUOUS MOVEMENT COULD TEAR THEM AGAIN.

TELL *LISKA* THAT TOO.

RIGHT, NO RIDING- *HUH?*

MOTHER SANNA! YOU HAVE A *WICKED* MIND!

CHUCKLE

OH, PANKA! UH, HAVE YOU DECIDED?

I'LL MARRY GARETH.

HE IS A GOOD HUNTER AND HANDSOME. MORE IMPORTANT, HE IS *NICE* TO ME.

YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT HIS HUNTING SKILLS. HE'S VERY GOOD WITH A SPEAR.

YES-

-I'VE HEARD THE WOMEN TALK.

* GIGGLE *

PANKA! THAT'S UNSEEMLY!

I'M *NOT* A CHILD, BIG BROTHER. I *KNOW* WHAT I WANT.

PYNDAN, IF SHE'S THAT BOLD, ITS BEST SHE MARRIES BEFORE YOU'RE AN UNCLE. AT LEAST GARETH DOESN'T WANT CHILDREN.

HE SAYS NOT. PERHAPS PANKA WILL ESCAPE THE CURSE.

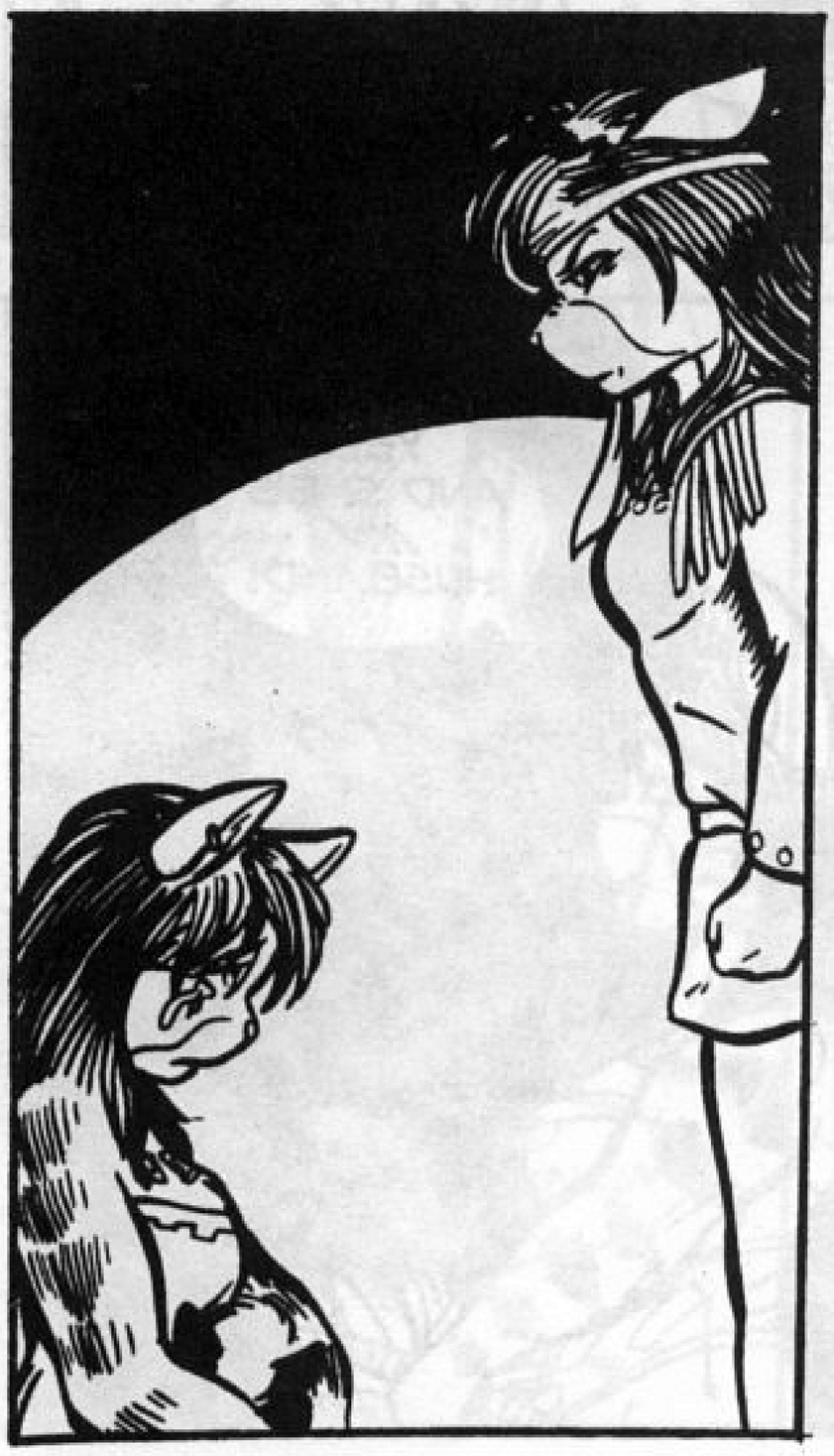
LISKA, SHE'S *TOO* BOLD!

SHE'S OLD ENOUGH TO KNOW DESIRE.

WILL YOU DANCE WITH ME TONIGHT?
OF COURSE, WHY WOULDN'T I?
WELL---

WHEN LAST I CLEANED OUR TENT-- I MISPLACED MY BAG OF SHURINAR STONES--
--IN YOUR PLACE.

IT IS YOUR RIGHT TO BEAT YOUR WIFE FOR HER MISTAKES.
I SUBMIT TO YOUR WILL.



WHAT'S DONE IS DONE. I MUST TELL PYNDAN.
COME, WIFE.

PANKA KOTA-TE-MAR, OF CLAN MITSEL-EMAN, HAVE YOU CHOSEN AMONG YOUR SUITORS?

YES.

I CHOOSE GARETH MASHA-RA-LEN FOR MY HUSBAND.

GARETH MASHA-RA-LEN, WILL YOU WED MY DAUGHTER?

I WILL CLAN LEADER, AS SOON AS THE SENESCHAL CAN PERFORM OUR CEREMONY.

MY BLESSINGS ON YOUR UNION.

I SEE TROUBLE FOR THAT HALFLING WARRIOR, OR MY NAME'S NOT FLINT-

GOOD KNIFE. SHAME TO DAMAGE IT.

AND WHAT DO *YOU* SUGGEST I DO?

ISSUE A CHALLENGE. FIGHT FOR HER....

HER *BROTHER'S* NOT WELL ENOUGH TO HUNT, SO HE'S NO CHALLENGE. *LISKA* IS CLAN LEADER.-

SHE'S A *WOMAN!*

AND A *WARCHIEF*, WITH *MANY* KILLS TO HER CREDIT- PERHAPS MORE THAN *YOU?*

PYNDAN, PLEASE WALK WITH ME. WE NEED TO TALK.

PURRRRR-

YES, LOVE.

SHAYGIN MIXED HER BAG OF SHURINAR STONES WITH MINE.

OH? OH!

MY WOMAN'S TIME SHOULD HAVE HAPPENED... SEVERAL DAYS AGO. I MAY BE CARRYING OUR KITTENS.

LISKA, I'M SORRY. I SHOULDN'T HAVE INFLICTED THIS ON YOU.

NORMALLY I WOULD BE HAPPY, BUT YOUR FAMILY CURSE-

PERHAPS THE GODDESS WILL SPARE OUR CHILDREN. ARE YOU SURE?

NO. IT'S TOO EARLY.

LISKA!

I CHALLENGE YOU! I WANT PANKA TO WIFE! WHEN I WIN, YOU WILL GRANT *ME* YOUR BLESSING.

YOU'RE *INSANE!* FIGHT *ME!*

YOU ARE NOT THE LEADER OF THIS CLAN, PYNDAN!

HE'S RIGHT-

BUT BE WARNED, WILOAM. NEVER IN MY LIFE HAVE I FOUGHT FOR *SPORT*. ONE OF US WILL *DIE!*

TO BE CONTINUED...

STORY: RICHARD THATCHER
PENCILS: SHAWNTAE HOWARD
INKS: SHANE FISHER
LETTERS: TED VOLLMER

DAVID, YOU MADE IT!

CAN'T MISS A FURRY CON.

YOUR LAST STORY AND ART WERE GREAT!

WISH I HAD A *REAL* FURRY MODEL.

I'VE GOT A SURPRISE.

EDGAR WOULD BE PROUD

SSSSHH!

SHE'S A SECRET UNTIL THE CON STARTS.

WELCOME, EVERYONE. TO START, WE HAVE A SPECIAL ADDRESS.

I'M HERE TO PRESENT A SURPRISE GUEST.

WINDFALL

COMING SOON

MEET LADY SEEKA --HERE ON A TRADE MISSION.

SHE UNDERSTANDS ENGLISH, BUT MUST USE SIGN LANGUAGE.

Katmandu

I AM HER ESCORT, TRANSLATOR, AND...

REBUS

Katmandu

BODYGUARD.

MEET HER SECURITY DETAIL.

THEY HAVE *NO* SENSE OF HUMOR.

BEAUTIFUL! THIS WILL *MAKE* THE CON!

LADY SEEKA WILL MODEL FOR ONE ART PANEL PER DAY.

TED HAS SIGNUP SHEETS.

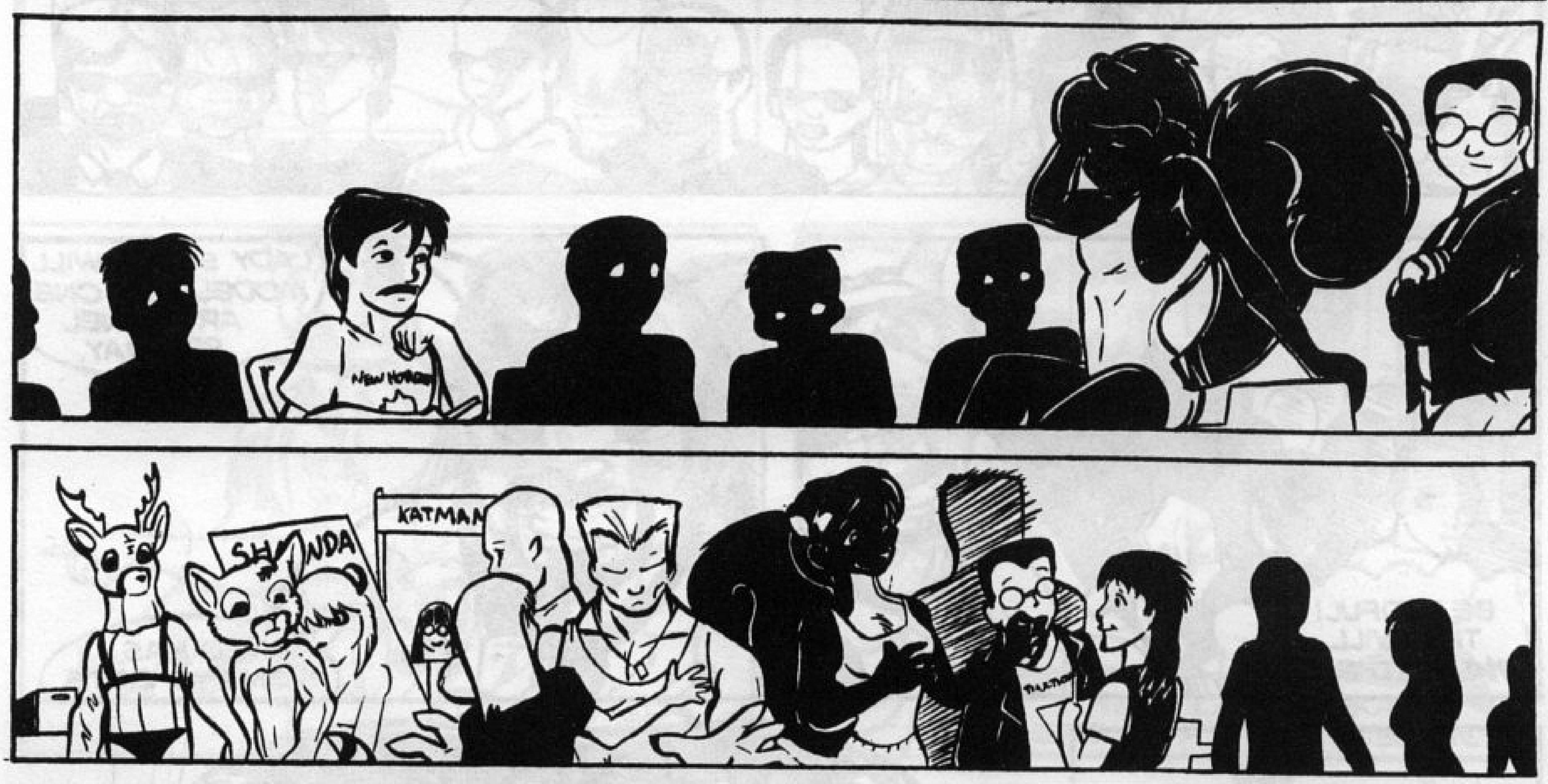
OF COURSE, SHE WON'T BE IN THE COSTUME CONTEST.

IT'S SUCH A GOOD COSTUME.

AWW! WIRES SHOW ON THE TAIL STEM!

SECURITY

SECÓR


SH NDA
KATMAN

HEY, WATCH
ME TAG HER TAIL.

PAM!

GET BACKUP AND GET HIM *OUT!*

SORRY, SIR. THAT NINE BLOCK OF ROOMS IS RESERVED.

THANKS.

HMMM! STANDARD SECURITY FOR AN IMPORTANT DIGNITARY.

WILL WE EVER SEE THE ACTRESS?

I ♥ MINERVA

NO! IT WOULD SPOIL THE ILLUSION!

?

SECURITY

SECUR

POE WOULD BE PROUD OF YOU.

HUH? WHY?

EXCELLENT USE OF THE 'PURLOINED LETTER' EFFECT.

EXPLAIN.

IT'S NOT A COSTUME.

YOUR REASONS?

ONE- EXPENSIVE SECURITY FOR HER.

TWO- FEDERAL CONNECTIONS: THE COPS DIDN'T FUSS ABOUT YOUR GUN.

THREE- I SAW HER YAWN. SPECIAL EFFECTS AREN'T *THAT* GOOD!

KENNETH...

I WON'T TALK. WHO WOULD BELIEVE ME?

ONE REQUEST...

SHOOT.

IF YOU FIND ANY OF *MY* PEOPLE, CAN I MEET THEM?

DEAL!

END

KATMANDU

Summer's End

STORY by CATHY CARTER
ART by DENNIS STAHL

"...HE'D BEEN PULLING MY HAIR ALL DAY, AND HE WAS RUNNING AWAY FROM ME ACROSS THE STREAM..."

"...UNTIL I MADE THE STONES MOVE..."

...BUT, I WAS YOUNG THEN, AND I THINK THERE WAS SOMETHING EVEN EARLIER...

I'LL ASK MOM...

...OH, YES, DEAR... I REMEMBER VERY WELL WHEN YOUR "GIFT" FIRST SHOWED UP...
...IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL FALL EVENING...

"...YOUR FATHER AND I WERE LYING ON BLANKETS OUTSIDE, WHILE YOU CHILDREN PLAYED..."

"TASSI AND XODI WERE CHASING THE LAST FIREFLIES OF SUMMER, AND PUTTING THEM IN A JAR..."

"...YOU WERE VERY LITTLE, BUT WE GAVE YOU A JAR, TOO..."

"XODI KEPT TEASING YOU... HE WOULD CATCH FIREFLIES, AND YELL THAT YOU COULDN'T CATCH ANY..."

"YOU'D GET MAD, THROW DOWN YOUR JAR, AND CRY... WE PATTED YOUR BACK AND TOLD YOU WHEN YOU WERE BIGGER, YOU'D BE ABLE TO CATCH THEM, TOO..."

"THE NEXT THING WE KNEW, YOU WERE CATCHING FIREFLIES..."

"...YOUR JAR GLOWED EVEN BRIGHTER THAN TASSI AND XODI'S..."

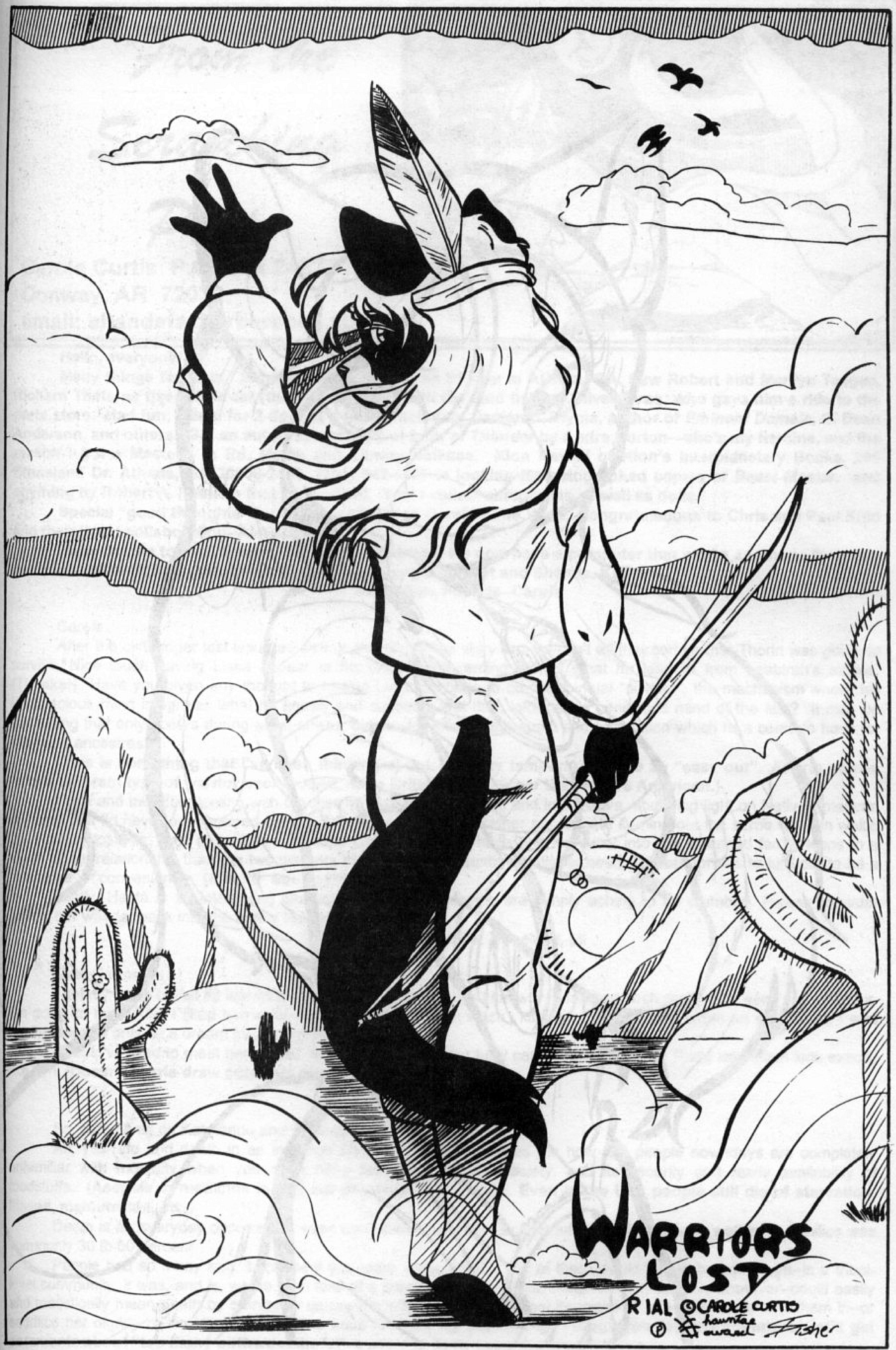
"FINALLY, ALL THREE OF YOU PILED DOWN ON THE BLANKETS AND WENT TO SLEEP... DADDY CARRIED YOU IN, AND I PUT YOU ALL TO BED"

"...YOUR FATHER WENT BACK OUT TO OPEN THE JARS... AND WHEN HE CAME TO YOURS, A **SHOWER OF SPARKS** SHOT OUT AND CIRCLED ROUND HIS HEAD... THEN, THEY DISAPPEARED ...WE **STILL** DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU FILLED YOUR JAR WITH..."

...MAYBE I BETTER WRITE ABOUT XODI AND THE WADING STONES AFTER ALL... I DON'T THINK THE MASTER WILL **BELIEVE** THAT STORY...

...GODS! HE MIGHT EVEN ASK ME TO **DEMONSTRATE**!... AND I JUST GOT THE SMOKEY SMELL OUT OF MY CLOTHES FROM OUR **FIRE LESSONS**!

END


WARRIORS
LOST
R IAL ©CAROLE CURTIS
haunting award

From the Scratching Post

Carole Curtis P.O. Box 2452
Conway, AR 72032
email: shandafa@cyberback.com

Hello, everyone--

Many things to relate. Went to OutWorld '97, an SF con in Atlanta, GA. Saw Robert and Marilyn Teague, Richard Thatcher fixed their car (thanks, sweetie!) with the kind help of Oliver Evas, who gave him a ride to the parts store. Had fun, talked for 2 days to people, including Cameron Thyme, author of *Eminent Domain*, C. Dean Anderson, and others. Got an autographed copy of *Lord of Thunder* by Andre Norton---she's my heroine, and the reason I got a Master's in Ed. Media and Library Science. Klon Newell of Klon's Interplanetary Books, 305 Stoneland Dr. Athens, GA 30606-2455 (706) 543-1127 is looking for autographed copies of *Beast Master*, and anything by Robert A. Heinlein that I can afford. Yes! I collect autographs as well as dolls.

Special "good thoughts" for JoAnn and Boyce Garald Kline. Also, congratulations to Chris and Paul Kidd and their latest collaboration--Alexandra.

Many thanks to Paul Fender. Due to his kindness, we now have a computer that <u>works</u> and hope to go on-line soon. Mike McNeil has offered to design web pages for Kat and Shanda. Kudos!

Tails High, Friends--Carole

Carole,

After the cliffhanger last issue as well as the title of the story arc, I wasn't all that certain that Thorin was going to survive. Nice touch having Liska appear in his dream and remind him of what he learned from Leahtrah's stories. **(Thanks!)** Have you given any thought to having Liska continue to be his spiritual "advisor", the mechanism where his unconscious mind integrates what he knows and suspects and then informs his conscious mind of the fact? It may be something that only occurs during great stress, but would reflect the respect and admiration which he's come to have for his wife's ancestress.

(This is something that I've been thinking about. It's very tempting, but it's an "easy out". Thorin comes from a different type of warrior background, more British/Celtic rather than Native American.)

Liska and the tribe dealing with the loss of Rial was interesting and informative, shedding light on Native American customs that I'd never encountered before. Sadly, it proved to be rather appropriate coming out the same week in which the industry lost Kim Yale to cancer. I do hope Liska's taking Pyndan and his sister into her extended family leads to a much closer relationship than the two warriors think it might. A sentimentalist at heart, I'd hate for this to turn out to be a "marriage" of convenience. **(It isn't! See next book.)**

Lastly, Hesta is an interesting character, one whose depths are simply aching to be plumbed. Please consider having her wander back into the tribe's life soon. **(She does.)**

Pat Mullet Freeland, MI

Dear Carole,

I got my issue of Kat #9 last week. What a great cover, didn't know Pyndan had such pretty blue eyes and white fur. I'm going to miss Rial, I liked him a lot. I was glad that Thorin wasn't killed in the explosion when he saw Liska, I was hoping it would only be a dream from the shock he got.

I would've liked to meet her myself. Best wishes from your furry cat lover. Glad to see Rial's little kitten look exactly like him. **(Doesn't Terrie draw <u>cute</u> babies!)**

Tail High! George Ferrocarril

So, comments on Katmandu and Shanda--

Ah, yes- life and death in an iron age society. It always amazes me how few people nowadays are completely unfamiliar with mortality when you don't have modern medicine, society, and its security and ready availability of foodstuffs. **(Asepsis in medicine is still not practiced everywhere. Even in the U.S. people still die of starvation, illness, malnutrition, etc.)**

Death is an everyday occurrence, even now--barely 90 years ago, infant mortality, even in well-to-do families was commonly 30 to 50 percent.

People had so many kids, because if you were lucky, maybe half of them would live to breeding age--in a tribal-level community, it was, and is, worse. The loss of a provider-hunter, father, metal worker, warrior, whatever--could easily and realistically mean death by starvation unless the wife could find another husband or relatives would take them in--or sacrifice her dignity by prostituting herself to keep the kids fed and clothed. **(Thank you for this comment. I still get comments about "too many births/deaths". I've actually been conservative on these.)**

Wasil is quite lucky, judged from this perspective. Her tribe is willing to look after her, through Liska. **(She is being taken on as almost another wife, but actually has more of a "sister" status and may remarry later.)** Which brings up another point.

Carole, it's good that you point out the difference between touching for comfort and friendship--and sexual advance. In a sexually permissive society that treats sex in such an offhand and juvenile fashion, touching in any way becomes confused with "making a pass" at someone.

Hogwash.

It's worse here in California, than other places I've been, but many people I know can't stand physical contact with others because they can't tell the difference between friendship and lust. And that is very sad. **(I don't like being touched except by friends because of this fact. Those that I do hug are friends--extended family, for they understand affection is not a request for sex.)**

Humans are primates. Physical contact is a social instinct in the species, and exists to form and strengthen social bonding--it is not necessarily bound up in mating or courtship behavior. Too many people can't, or won't, understand this at all.

So, Pyndan and Liska's equivalent of hand-holding is both honorable, acceptable, and makes sense--once put into proper perspective.

Steve Corbett Anaheim, CA

Carole--

I very much liked the first collection of "Katmandu: Velites and Hoplites". I have collected about the Antarctic issues till issue #9, while the first issues were often sold out and out of reach. During that time I wondered how the first issues came out, and how. Leahtrah and Thorin meet together. **(Glad you finally got to read 1-3.)**

Then through a product-update bulletin from Mailbox Books **(Yaay! Ed Zolna!!)** I've found "Velites and Hoplites" and bought an issue through the mail. It was rather great drama, a plot in which the man and woman meet as enemies in war, then gradually became partners in survival, then beautiful lovers. It was original, and Terrie Smith's art was of good help.

You were also good in the later issues. But may I ask a question concerning Liska's culture: when a character is dead, and a surviving loved one cuts off his/her hair, or a little cut in the palm, and lays it on the body, what does it mean? **(It is a mark of grieving and is also part of the funeral offering. It acknowledges change and loss in the lives of those who are left.)**

I also enjoyed "A Private Place" (issue #7, but Ted Vollmer, Dann Phillips, and Steve Addlesee) **(There are more of Ted's stories in New Horizons and Kat #9.)** and the spirit trickster Helios, with his humorous but wise fables. **(Cathy Carter has a new story with art by Dennis Stahl in Kat #10!)**

I've heard that Terrie left doing Katmandu. I understand. Terrie is a busy lady. She had been working on "Havok, Inc." and other stuff. I'm a fan of her and her versatile, lovely work. **(I hope she will be able to guest spot when she can get a moment free.)**

Thanks for getting my letter.

John Shughart Newville, PA

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TANK VIXENS

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